

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1631

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 7700

STADIS//////////

FOLLOWING RECD FROM BOMBAY SENT NEW DELHI DATED MAY 16, 1978 BEING
RPTD TO YOU.

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOMBAY 1190

STADIS//////////

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MNUC, PARM, TECH, IN
SUBJ: INDO-AMERICAN NUCLEAR RELATIONS

REF: BOMBAY 1150

1. AFTER DISCUSSION OF HEAVY WATER ISSUE WITH SETHNA ON
MAY 15, HE GAVE ME A RUN DOWN ON EFFORTS IN NEW DELHI LAST
WEEK TO FIND FRUITFUL AVENUES FOR THE PM'S TALKS IN
WASHINGTON. HE HAD FOUND NEW DELHI OFFICIALS TO BE GLOOMY
ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR THE NUCLEAR PORTION OF THE PM'S
TALKS. HIS COLLEAGUES HAD REPORTED THAT THERE WERE NO
SIGNS OF THE KIND OF PROGRESS IN THE CTB OR SALT II TALKS
NECESSARY FOR MJORARJI TO AGREE TO FULL-SCOPE SAFEGUARDS.
MOREOVER, THE NEUTRON BOMB PROJECT WAS VIEWED AS INDICATION THAT
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VERTICAL PROLIFERATION HAS NOT ABATED.

2. ON THE IMMEDIATE ISSUE OF CONTINUING NUCLEAR SUPPLY
FOR INDIA, THERE WAS DISTRESS OVER VIGOR OF BRADFORD-
GILINSKY MEMORANDUM, SURPRISED AT THE QUICKNESS OF LONG
AND OTTINGER MOVE TO OVERRIDE THE PRESIDENT, AND AMUSEMENT
OVER REPORTS OF U.S. APPROVAL OF A FULL CORE LOAD FOR

BRAZIL'S 600MW REACTOR (INCIDENTALLY SETHAN ASKED WHETHER I HAD ANY REACTION FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF THE AUTHENTICITY OF THIS REPORT). SETHNA SAID THAT THE PM PERSONALLY WAS INDIGNANT THAT WE WOULD LICENSE SUCH A LARGE SHIPMENT FOR BRAZIL, A DEVELOPING COUNTRY THAT REFUSES NPT AND HIS CONTRACTED FOR ENRICHMENT FACILITIES, WHEN WE WERE GIVING INDIA SO MUCH TROUBLE.

3. SETHNA ATTRIBUTED PART OF THE GLOOM IN DELHI TO FALL-OUT FROM THE JANATA PARTY'S DIFFICULTIES WHICH HE BELIEVES HAS SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCED MORARJI'S FLEXIBILITY. HE BELIEVES THAT CONCILIATORY GESTURES TO U.S. WILL BE MORE DIFFICULT AS THE DISPUTING FACTIONS OF JANATA WOULD USE THEM AS SIGNS OF WEAKNESS BY THE P.M.

4. SETHNA SAID THAT IN SPITE OF AN INCLINATION AMONG HIS COLLEAGUES TO STAND PAT HE HAD EMPHASIZED THAT INDIA IN ALL LIKELIHOOD WOULD HAVE TO RESIGN ITSELF TO NO MORE U.S. FUEL UNLESS SOME WAY IS FOUND TO RESPOND TO POINTS U.S. CRITICS HAVE MADE REGARDING DISPOSITION OF SPENT FUEL NOW IN INDIA. HOWEVER, HE SAID THAT HIS SUGGESTION FOR MODIFIED BUY-BACK WAS "SHOUTED DOWN." HIS CRITICS NOTED THAT BUY-BACK WAS ORIGINALLY INTENDED TO GUARANTEE FUEL SUPPLY THROUGH 1993. THEY ACCUSED SETHNA OF PROPOSING TO TRADE AWAY WHAT HAD ALWAYS BEEN REGARDED AS A VALUABLE ASSET FOR A FEW YEARS SUPPLY OF FRESH URANIUM.
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5. HE SAID HE POINTED OUT THAT BUY-BACK MIGHT AT LEAST GUARANTEE SOME FRESH UF6, WHILE REPROCESSING WOULD ONLY PROVIDE RAW MATERIALS FROM HIGHLY IRRADIATED FUEL FOR MIXED OXIDE THAT WAS YET TO BE PROVED AND THAT WOULD ONLY SUFFICE FOR A FEW YEARS IN ANY CASE. HE FELT THAT EVEN THOUGH OPPOSITION TO REVIVING BUY-BACK HAD BEEN IMMEDIATE AND LOUD, HE HAD PLANTED THE GERM OF AN INDIA WHICH HAD A SMALL CHANCE OF TAKING HOLD.

6. SETHNA ALSO SAID THAT HE AND SOME OF HIS COLLEAGUES REMAIN PUZZLED OVER WHAT IS WIDELY REGARDED AS U.S. ENCOURAGEMENT OF BRITISH MEDDLING IN WHAT IS ESSENTIALLY A BILATERAL INDO-AMERICAN MATTER. HE SAID THAT BRITISH HICOM'S APPROACH TO THE PM AND VAJPAYEE HAD BEEN INTERPRETED AS AN INDIRECT ATTEMPT BY U.S. TO ADD TO PRESSURE TO INDIA FOR AN ACCOMMODATION ON NUCLEAR AFFAIRS. HE AGAIN NOTED THAT FRANCE IS MUCH MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE U.K. IN CONTINGENT NUCLEAR ACCOMPLISHMENTS, BUT SAID FRENCH SCRUPULOUSLY REFRAIN FROM INTERFERING IN INDIA'S RELATIONS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES. HE CONCLUDED THAT THERE ARE ENOUGH TROUBLES IN TRYING TO WORK OUT SOLUTIONS TO

BILATERAL PROBLEMS WITHOUT INTERVENING BY A COUNTRY THAT
HAS LITTLE TO OFFER INDIA IN THIS AREA. I TOLD HIM
THAT I KNEW OF NO U.S. ENCOURAGEMENT TO BRITISH TO SEEK
FURTHER DEFINITION TO INDIA'S NUCLEAR POLICY. I ADDED
THAT U.K. IS A COUNTRY DEDICATED TO IMPROVING NON-
PROLIFERATION STANDARDS SO I COULD UNDERSTAND THEIR
DESIRE, IN THEIR OWN WAY, TO TRY TO PROMOTE WIDER INTER-
NATIONAL AGREEMENT ON THIS MATTER. I AGREED TO
REPORT HIS MISGIVINGS ABOUT BRITISH ACTIVITIES RELATING
TO U.S. INDIAN DISCUSSIONS. COURTNEY UNQUOTE
GOHEEN

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